

# Old Blazer's Hero

By DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY.

## CHAPTER XVIII.—(Continued.)

He did not look up at the house as he went by, and so missed the sight of Heppibah, who stood mournfully pressing the tip of her nose against a pane in the window of the dark front room, staring out upon the street. She saw him, however, and was struck by something heartless in his gait and the attitude of his figure. He was striding in the direction of the Miners' Rest, and Heppibah knew that her own fears were, she judged in the narrow hall to snatch a strap of some sort from a hook, and then slipped after him into the street. He was going so slowly that she had no difficulty in overtaking him, but when she laid her hand on his shoulder he turned and looked at her. He was in a little while becoming vaguely conscious that a hurrying step behind him had suddenly accommodated itself to his own, turned round and recognized her.

"Been out for a walk, Mister Edward?" she asked in an cheerful and casual tone as she could secure.

"Yes," he answered her indifferently, and walked on again.

"Ned," she said with an effort, hardly knowing how she found heart of grace to speak at all, "if I do you a world of good if you'd tell a body what it is as on your mind instead of carryin' it on all by yourself."

He went dogged again, and she, catching sight of his face in the lamplight, saw the futility of her own words, and yet having begun to speak could not retract them.

"I wonder at you, Ned, you as used to be so bright and brave, to throw yourself away in this fashion. What can't be mended must be endured, my darlin'. Do be a man, and wake up a bit."

"Good night, Heppibah," he answered, without so much as looking at her. The tone of voice and manner quelled her, and she dropped behind and suffered him to walk away without further molestation. Being that he did not turn, she dared to follow him, and having seen him enter the open door of the Miners' Rest, she stood for a while in the street as stricken and sadly as he himself had done a little while before, and then walked some crying.

Blane sat down in a corner of the place, after having distributed a cold lead here and there, and obscured himself behind a newspaper which he did not read. His arrival cast a chill upon the company for a minute or so, but the broken conversation was resumed, though not without some meaning glances in his direction. The old landlady served him unwillingly, and was evidently desirous that her unwillingness should be seen. He took this with a stoic unconcern, as he accepted everything. He was going to the bad, and he knew it. He walked forward with his eyes open, and he would not so much as try to turn back. In line, he was bent on going to the dogs with all possible expedition, a condition of mind which is only possible for men of originally good quality.

## CHAPTER XIX.

Mr. Will Hackett was not the man to suffer very severely from the quins of conscience. He had left his wife basely, and in his heart he knew just as well as anybody could have told him that he had acted like a cur. Of course, that of itself was a disagreeable thing to know, and equally of course it was easy to be sure that no harm would befall her, and to promise that in due time he would go back to her with his pocket full of dollars and more than make up for everything. And, side by side with this excellent intent—which he knew admirably well he never intended to carry out—was the natural sentiment of ill-usage, and a sort of forgiving resentment. Good wives make good husbands; and if Mary had known how to keep him, there was the making in him of he knew not what of amiability and good fellowship. So, on the whole, he went away with a light heart.

His first appearance in New York was fairly successful. He took something like first place in the second rank of singers known to the American public, and his name came to be a safe draw wherever he was announced to sing.

But if the manager could see that the chief tenor of his concert troupe sang only at his bidding, there were things much more important to the tenor's prosperity and his own to which he could not attend. He could not insure that Will should be early to bed and early to rise, or that he should go to bed sober and rise with his throat unparched. He could not insure even that this impracticable tenor should not die heavily an hour before a concert, and sing rather badly and wildly after it.

"You're making a dreadful idiot of yourself," he would say at times, for familiarity with many men had taught him candor, "and you'll regret it a lot more than ever I shall. I dare say you'll last my time out, even as you're going. I'm beastly disappointed in you, of course, and it's no use pretending that I'm not. But I'm speaking for your own good now, though I'm not likely to do you much. You'll be about as pretty to listen to as a raven in a year or two. Now if you'd only live straight and work a bit you've got a lifelong future. Go as you're going and I'll give you three years to ruin yourself in."

To this harangue Will listened often, generally in sullen mood, though sometimes, if it came early in the morning and his head was aching, not without belief inward reproaches. Meantime he lived in clover, of the growth he cared for, and his salary being paid weekly he generally had plenty of money in his pocket. He became very gorgeous in salient, and had rather more of the music hall than the concert platform air about him.

Picking up gold and silver, he of course went to seed as his gains to his wife, Old Blazer was well to do,

and could take capital care of her. There was no doubt about it, and he never permitted himself to doubt that the care was taken. At any rate he refrained from making inquiries, and so escaped any burden which might have been laid upon his conscience. Meantime the money came in gaily, and for a man who had as little of forethought as he had it seemed inevitable that it should continue to come in always.

As time went on he and his manager came over and over again to open quarrel, and each grew heartily weary of the other. Hackett's constant cry was that the man who had found him out and opened the way to fortune for him was fattening on his work. The manager's retort was that the work was always indifferently done and often ill done. Each grew anxious to escape from the contract, and after many days the manager found his chance. The popular tenor had dined unwisely as his habit was, but on this occasion he was prohibited from appearing on the platform, and an apology was presented to the public in his behalf. Next morning a formal letter reached Hackett to the effect that the contract was dissolved, and that if he felt himself aggrieved he might seek legal remedy. He felt himself aggrieved, and he sought his legal remedy. The case went against him. The public found the details amusing, and Hackett found himself out of employment and nearly penniless. He shuffled along somehow, sartorial glories growing dimmer, and engagements growing rarer and more poorly paid, as he showed himself less and less trustworthy in his work.

The glorious voice began to go. It even cracked in public on that noble high A of which he had been so proud, and which had indeed been wont to ring out like a clarion. He turned into a restaurant after that night's concert, and sat alone in a sort of sick-hearted stupor. He had been hissed for the first time in his life, and he resolved that it should be the last. It was time to end it all, time to ring down the curtain on the poor tragedian's life he had been all along. The deserted wife came back to him in memory. He recalled her as she had been when he had first known her, and a faint remorse touched him. She had been right, after all, and had had a reason for her reproaches.

While in this mood he sat absently tapping with the tip of his knife upon a newspaper which lay on the table before him. The journal was creased and crumpled, and had evidently been left there by some recent guest. Hackett's eyes fell upon it, and he looked at it with so interest until he awoke to the fact that it was a newspaper from home, and began to glance at its columns here and there. A Brocton newspaper! He thought touched him oddly, and he went on glancing here and there without noticing greatly what he read. And meantime the knife went on tapping, tapping mechanically at the same spot of the journal.

The fancy came into his mind suddenly, what if there were something there where he was tapping which might interest him, which might be of good or bad augury to him? He thought of this for a minute or two, fancifully and vaguely, and then glanced at the spot. The tip of the knife blade fell upon the name of John Howarth. The name of John Howarth was in the register of deaths, and the name that followed it was the name of Fanny, his wife.

## CHAPTER XX.

There is a world which has not more or less the habit of reproducing itself. When a man begins to lie he finds himself often enough compelled to go on, and one falsehood breeds many. He that has stolen may find himself so placed that he must steal again. But the actual compulsive force of vice to vice is hardly found anywhere so strongly as in intemperance. The habit catches, not merely on the man who himself is abandoned to drink, but on people who surround him, and who are grieved and wounded by his folly.

Ned Blane must needs take to drinking because Will Hackett declined to keep himself sober; and now, for the salvation of a life or two, as the fate which guides the destinies of men would have it for the nonce, another must needs enter the demon's circle, and go whirling toward the gulf for a while, only to be arrested at last by the force which set him in motion.

Mary Hackett was on terms of some familiarity with the Bard, and in her happy days had been wont to laugh with some heartiness over his effusions. Mary had, on one occasion, when at a school room tea Shadrach had read a set of verses more or less pertinent to the occasion, so far relied upon her power over her own risible muscles as to congratulate him upon his production, and from that hour he was her willing slave.

It was a matter of absolute necessity that Mary should put her hand to some kind of work, and after much casting to and fro in her mind as to the best way of earning enough to hold body and soul together she decided on starting an infant school. News of this enterprise no sooner came to the Bard's ears than he set to work to hunt out pupils for her, and brought her half a dozen of the poorer sort. When the Bard happened to be engaged on night work at the Old Blazer he would brighten himself up on an afternoon, and in his tall hat, to the place which Mary had hired for her school and there humbly presenting himself would listen with a beaming satisfaction to the infant lessons.

The Bard was allowed to go to the school, and he became a familiar figure there; but little by little the beaming complacency faded out of him, and days came when he would sit grim and silent, and when even the scholastic successes of a slave of Heppibah's, who was six years of age, and had mastered many

words of one syllable, failed to delight him.

Then later he began to have little oddities of manner and motion which the schoolmistress was slow to understand. By and by these little oddities so grew and multiplied that she was forced to battle with herself lest she might understand them. And then at last, in spite of herself, she was compelled to understand and to beg the falling Shadrach to cross his visits.

The doing of this cost her bitter tears and many a new headache. But half her little world seemed now floating on that hideous drink whirlpool, and swirling towards its depths. Her husband she had found out long ago. Then her most faithful sutor, who had passed as a model of what a man should be, followed on the same road. The smart, bright, genial lad was clean spoiled. He had grown haggard and unkempt and surly, and his old friends had begun to give him the cold shoulder, and to pass him with averted unrecognizing glance in the street. All this, as she knew full well, was in part the fruit of her unhappy marriage. It weighed upon her conscience to think that she was in any measure responsible for it.

And now that the harmless, gentle-hearted Bard had joined the ranks she saw her own work in the matter still. Ned Blane's misery and his falling off were breaking Heppibah's heart, and Heppibah's unhappiness had started Shadrach down hill.

This dreadful new departure could not long remain hidden from Heppibah's eyes, and when she beheld it the staunch creature's heart seemed like to break at once.

"Shadrach," she said, "you can go home. You'd better. But, oh! to think that a man will give like yours should demean himself to this, which is a thing as the brutes that perish would not do."

The wretched Shadrach swayed, and beamed upon her with a fatuous smile.

"What's the good talkin'?" said Shadrach. "Does man's heart good?"

"I do know what it does for a man's heart," cried Heppibah with sudden tears. "It knows it breaks a woman's. And Edward, too! Then you, that was thought to be the soberest of the town! Go away, Shadrach, do; and heaven forgive your soul!"

"That's a little too much," Shadrach protested, moved vaguely and stupidly by her tears. "Tell you what it is, Heppibah. It's Ned. That's what it is. Breaks your heart see a fine young chap like that?"

"Oh, you fool!" said Heppibah bitterly. "What's poor Ned's fault to you as you should go an' copy it? Go away, and never let me see you any more!"

"All right," responded Shadrach. "I shall go to the Rest and ask for Mister Ned. Said he wanted me to pay for a drink, because he sared my life—didn't he? So I will."

"Dye think he'd been drinking with the likes of these?" demanded Heppibah, driven high to her wits' end. "Go home, an' be a laughing stock along the road."

And there with her tears became a passion not to be resisted, and she hid her face in her apron after the manner of her class, and cried as if her heart were fairly broken. Shadrach took himself away, and left her to her grief, ashamed enough to be glad of absence from her, too bland and mild to be wrathful with her or with himself, and easily restored to a condition of vacuous self-satisfaction.

It was early evening still, and when, an hour later, Ned Blane reached home, he glanced askance at Heppibah's red eyes, and guessed himself the cause of her grief. The unspoken reproach of her face, its hungry pity and affection, stung him. It angered him to be pitied and wept over.

He and Heppibah were alone in the kitchen. She busied herself in preparing a meal for him, but she had not so far mastered the hysterics of her weeping that she could control herself completely, and an occasional sob escaped her. He, longing against the upright of the mantle shelf, with crossed feet and arms, looked angrily at her for a time as she went to and fro about her duties, and at last broke out severely now? What sort of a house is this to come home to?"

"Who made it the sort of house it is?" Heppibah almost shrieked, turning upon him.

"Eh?" he said, advancing a step and staring wildly at her. "Eh? What's that?"

"You," returned Heppibah. "Ay, you may hit me, if you like, Mister Ned. Me as nursed you when you was a child, and loved you better than if even you'd been my own."

(To be continued.)

Needed a Slope. Among the stories treasured by the older inhabitants of a Massachusetts town is one that relates to a none too scrupulous shopkeeper who flourished over 30 years ago, and a variety of potatoes for which he acted as sponsor.

They were known as "Dover's Seedlings," and were favorites with the people who succeeded in making them grow. Unfortunately, Eben Rhodes was not one of the few, and he lamented his failure in public, upon which the shopkeeper remonstrated.

"See here, Eben," he said, firmly, "you've got no right to go spilling sales. Where did you plant those seedlings?"

"In as good soil as ever a potato could desire," said Mr. Rhodes, with dignity.

"On level ground?" asked the shopkeeper.

"Level and fine," said Eben.

For a moment the shopkeeper was silent. Then he clapped his hand to his forehead.

"Come to think of it," he cried, "I believe those you bought were side-hill Dover's, Eben!"

Just Had to Get Well. "Your husband has quite recovered from his illness," said one woman.

"Yes," answered the other.

"The doctor's medicine must have done him good."

"I dunno. It was the medicine. He got to spurring up what the bill would be an' concluded he had been sick as long as he could afford it. So he went back to work."—Washington Star.

When some men know their duty, they try to dodge it by asking advice.

## EVOLUTION OF THE DOG

Traces of Extinct Species Found in the Tertiary Period.

The dog was domesticated by man in prehistoric times, and its remains are frequently found in ancient burial sites, shell mounds and burial places both in the old and new world. Remains of various other species of its family (canidae) are found in the older quaternary deposits along with those of mastodons, mammoths, etc., but there is little evidence as to which, if any, of these species are domesticated by man, says the Montreal Herald. It is probable that the domestic dog is the result of many and various intercrossings with the jackal, wolf, coyote and other wild species, so that the original strain can hardly be determined.

In the strata of the tertiary period are found remains of numerous extinct species, which illustrate the evolution of the different species of modern canidae and their gradual divergence from the common ancestral type of the carnivora. The canidae live mostly in the open country, and hunt in packs, running down their prey in the open and capturing it by a combination of superior intelligence and greater speed. The development of this group of carnivora has been, accordingly, chiefly in brain capacity and in the adaptation of the feet and limbs to swift and long-continued running. The earliest canidae, of the eocene and oligocene epochs, were proportioned like the modern civets, which are forest dwellers. They had short limbs and long tails and their brain capacity was very much less than it is in their modern descendants. Some had retractile claws; all had five toes on each foot and the full series of forty-four teeth of the primitive mammalia. Between these earliest canidae and their modern species are several intermediate stages in the successive tertiary formations.

The modern dogs range from a highly carnivorous type, such as the wolf and especially the Indian dhole (cyon) and the South American bush-dog (telonon) to small omnivorous species approaching the meekness in the character of their teeth. The series of fossil forms leading up to these different types are distinguishable at quite an early period and all pass through a course of parallel evolution, each race progressing independently in the direction of greater intelligence and higher speed. Other races of dogs now extinct progressed in different direction by divergent evolution, some assuming the size and proportions of the bears and from some of these the bears may be collaterally descended, while another series connects the dogs with the raccoons.

## TOLD BY OLD CIRCUS MAN.

Recreation the Giant Produced When Traveling by Steamboat.

"The great giant never made a greater sensation," said the old circus man, "than he invariably did when seen on the upper deck of a steamboat."

"When we shipped from one town to another we commonly moved by the road; but sometimes when we were going to stop at two towns along a river, and the distance between the two towns was great, and the old man could make a profitable dicker with the steamboat people, why, then we'd make the ship by boat. And moving in this way the giant did tremendously advertise the show."

"You see, we couldn't have him crawl aboard a boat by the gangway, between decks, and curl himself up there somewhere below; we had to carry him where he could be seen by all."

"He would step up from the wharf to the steamboat's upper deck, and stay right there straight through the trip, in full view from the river's banks on either side, a man as tall as the steamboat's chimneys. And seen walking or standing there as the boat came along, or sitting there, maybe, in a great armchair that we never failed to carry along for him, he made a sight that everybody along the river came to see and looked at with wonder."

"And when we had come to where we were to land, where they could see the great giant close at hand, why, the people there looked at him with awe."

"All of which, as you can easily see, made business great for the show—in fact, we never hit a town any harder than when we hit it so."—New York Sun.

## Animal Hypnotism

The question whether some animals have the power to hypnotize others is largely a matter of opinion. My own view is that there is no such thing as hypnotism among animals. There undoubtedly is fear-paralysis; which might easily be called hypnotism; but I do not think it belongs in that class of phenomena. Human beings are at times as much subject to fear-paralysis as are birds that are attacked by dangerous serpents. Paralysis from fear is a very different thing from hypnotic influence. Hypnotism is always exercised by the surrender of the mental faculties to the will of the operator. Fear, on the other hand, often produces complete paralysis of the voluntary muscles, and also of the brain, by a process which I consider entirely different.—W. T. Hornaday, Director New York Zoological Park.—St. Nicholas.

## Women Do Better.

Seventy-five per cent of the women and but sixty-three per cent of the men taking the civil service examination are able to pass it.

There are men who wouldn't dare read the declaration of independence to their wives.



## Ice and Cold Storage House.

While many farmers consider an ice house a luxury that is not for them, a building such as is shown in the cut may be erected at small cost, and if the ice can be had for the cutting and drawing it will be found profitable. Even in sections where ice is scarce such a structure would be worth all it cost to a fruit grower who desired to hold back his products in cold storage.



Diagram of a simple ice house structure with numbered parts.

vide off a portion of the space for a cold storage room, as shown in the lower part of the illustration and one has a place where fruit, milk and butter may be kept in good condition during the warmest days of summer. Try an ice house, even though it be but a small one, and you will be surprised to see how little it will cost and how useful it is.

Winter Fruit Tree Pruning. While the early spring pruning and the summer pinching back of the small shoots covers the main pruning of the fruit trees, much good work may be done during the open days of winter which will, at least, save time in the spring. Broken limbs may be removed and many of the inside limbs which are overlapping the fruiting twigs can be cut off during the winter as well as in the spring. The work of pruning should always be done with a saw on limbs too large to cut with a sharp knife; in pruning saw from the under side of the limb first, sawing up a quarter or a half through and finishing from the top. This will result in a clean cut and there will be no splintering, as would be the case if a heavy limb was cut through from the top. In the winter pruning of orchards keep your eyes open and note the condition of the trees, so that at the proper time any remedy for any trouble found may be applied.

## Half-Soling the Sled.

Soles made of poles are almost a thing of the past since the sawed ones have come into use. There are still some who do not use the sawed soles because of not knowing how to put them on, after they have become dry without breaking or splitting them.

The illustration shows how the trick is done. A teakettle full of boiling water, poured on very gradually while the sole is being sprung, is all that is necessary in almost every instance. The stream should be no larger than a lead pencil, and poured on continually. Any one who has never tried this method will be surprised how



Illustration of a person using a teakettle to steam a sled sole.

quickly the sole will bend down into its place.—R. A. Gallier, in Farm and Home.

## Maturity of Fowls.

The Leghorns may mature in six months, but with the larger breeds a fowl is not matured if under one year of age; and it is a settled conclusion that neither animals nor poultry should be used for breeding until the system has had time to develop and make complete growth. Pullets sometimes begin to lay before they are fully matured, but in such cases their eggs should not be used for hatching purposes. The use of eggs from pullets that have not completed their growth is sure to injure the flock if the practice is continued for several years.

## Indiscriminate Feeding.

On some farms all kinds of poultry are fed together, old and young, and geese, ducks, turkeys and chickens. There are always downbearing individuals in all barnyards, hence it will be an advantage to separate the older from the younger stock when feeding. The natural consequence of promiscuous commingling of fowls is that the best and strongest take their choice and leave the refuse to be eaten by the weaker, whereas the best should be

given to the poorest in order to help them to a condition of thrift and growth. It is also more economical to make some distinction when feeding, especially when a profit is desired.

## Cost of Raising Corn.

The present low price of corn and the enormous quantity which is piled up in bins and warehouses everywhere in this country is the most emphatic evidence that corn can be produced at a very low cost, and it is plain from the experience of hundreds of corn raisers that there is a profit in producing corn on a large scale, even at the present low prices, for many thousands of farmers have made a good living and laid some profit by their corn lands.

It is perfectly true that the man with a small farm, devoted exclusively to corn raising, can get only a very precarious living out of corn when the price is under 25 cents on the farm. But even the small farmer can assure himself of a substantial surplus with the prospect of a substantial surplus some years, if he devotes a part of his land to raising the products which he needs for his family, and raises corn, well cultivated and carefully cared for, on the rest of it.

It must not be forgotten that the present low price of corn is due to two years of very extraordinary yields, and though this year's crop is moderate, by comparison with those years, the surplus in the country, added to what was produced this year, makes the supply in the country about as large as it was ever known to be, and the cost of production of the corn which most farmers have on hand at the present time, must be figured on the basis of large yields, so that, even at present low prices, the great bulk of the corn in the country represents a good deal more than what it has cost the farmer to produce it.

## Advantages of Farm Life.

It is the farmers' boys who are most likely to succeed, whether in business or in professional life. Spending most of their time under the open sky, breathing fresh air, and eating simple food, they are more likely to have vigorous health and strong constitutions than are their city cousins. Brought into constant contact with nature, they absorb a great deal of useful knowledge, and acquire habits of observation. Then, too, the regular farm work, the "chores" and numberless other little things keep them well occupied and enable them to feel that they are earning their way, thus giving to them a sense of independence and cultivating a spirit of self-reliance and manliness. The performance of a deal of drudgery is an indispensable preparation for all real success in life, whatever the occupation. A boy who is afraid of work or of soiling his hands need not expect to accomplish much in the world. Country boys have their full share of fun, but there are many disagreeable duties on a farm which farmers' boys learn to accept as a matter of course. Edward Eggleston speaking of the value of his farm training when a boy, once said to me: "I learned one thing of great value and that was to do disagreeable things cheerfully."—Josiah Strong, in Success.

## For Hitting Hens.

Mrs. Amanda Wilson writes to the Iowa Homestead: "I have been very much annoyed at times with persistent sitting hens. I have tried several methods of preventing them from becoming broody, and have at last hit upon a simple coop about two feet square and two feet high made of lath and attached to a rope, as shown in the illustration. Place



the hen inside the coop and let it swing about eighteen inches from the ground. The excitement of the curious chickens which stand around or the outside will quickly dispel the hatching idea from the most persistent sitting hen. Feed and water should be given the same as usual."

## The Milkman's Steady Job.

A veteran New York State dairyman who has been in the business over half a century says that commencing in 1876 he was away from home but one night in about twenty-two years. He always used to do his own milking. His average for many years was no less than twenty cows night and morning. He milked one cow nineteen years and about ten months in the year. In the year 1879 twenty cows gave him 100,000 pounds of milk, which netted him from the cheese factory \$1,000, he sides having his whey to feed to the hogs and calves.

## Relation of Size to Age.

There is no fixed relation between size and longevity in breeds of live stock, though it is a well established fact that, generally, small or medium sized animals live longer than very small ones. Also breeds that have a marked tendency to take on fat are shorter lived than the leaner breeds. These facts are recognized by live stock insurance companies, for they refuse to insure the heavy and fat producing breeds to as great age as others.

## Feeding Hens.

Nothing has yet been found which fills the bill so well as a ration on which the basis is skim milk in conjunction with finely ground oats or barley and shorts. All these are best formers, says Up-to-Date Farming. Barley is a fat former. A very satisfactory mixture consists of finely ground oats, five parts; finely ground barley, two parts; shorts, two parts, and oil meal, one part.